

**READY - Religious Education and Diversity**

Sharing experiences of, and approaches to,  
teacher education in the context of  
"Education and Training 2020" (ET 2020)



**READY**  
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND DIVERSITY

## **My READY journey**

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In August 2016 when Graeme Nixon & David Smith asked if the 2016/17 Professional Graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) students would like to be involved in the Religious Education and Diversity (READY) project looking at the diversity in religious education across Europe I could never have imagined it would take me on the journey it has and opened new avenues which I could never have envisaged.

Our first step on the project was preparing for our German student partners visit to Aberdeen in November 2016. A lesson in St Machars Cathedral proved fun and visits to Scottish schools to see what similarities / differences between Scottish & German approaches to religious education.

Meeting our German colleagues and discussing joint lesson planning was interesting however the demands of studies and school placement for both partners proved an obstacle to joint lesson planning.

However our reciprocal visit to the beautiful City of Tübingen by the Aberdeen partners in May 2017 allowed much more opportunity to follow on with joint lesson planning and sharing of tradition and culture. My e-twin partner Lydia & I worked together on a common Morality and Belief lesson of Assisted Dying (Euthanasia) and shared material to teach a Scottish-German lesson. The visit to the German schools were enlightening and invaluable in bringing the findings of the project on diversity together and in fact showed that there were indeed more similarities than differences between the two countries in the

teaching of religious education. The dedication and commitment of the RE teachers was also evident in both countries.

For me this opportunity to be involved in Religious Education across Europe sparked an interest in me that I knew I wanted to embrace. I had enjoyed spending time with my new e-twin partners and knew that I had met friends I would hope to keep in touch with in the future.

On return to Scotland I used the e Twinning platform to look for opportunities to continue my interest in shared European education projects.

In November I was approached by the British Council to train to become a schools Ambassador for e Twinning. Although I had no idea what exactly this would involve, I knew this was definitely something I wanted to do.

Introducing e Twinning to my own pupils, I started an e Twinning project with one of my S3 classes (age 14). The first project was with a school in Spain and one in Turkey where the pupils would share religious experience and traditions from each country. I could instantly see the potential and opportunity to bring an interactive and meaningful lesson into the classroom through e twinning. My class were instantly motivated and excited to be involved in something different and in particular looked forward to the opportunity to engage with pupils in schools in other countries and learn about their school life and culture.

My next project involved me linking up with one of my READY project colleagues from Tübingen, Susanne Katein. Suzi and I collaborated on a project on Human Rights with our pupils. This short four week project involved our pupils communicating by email and videos and discussing the similarities, differences and sharing their views on topics based on readings and classwork. Again this has been received positively by pupils involved in the project so much that Suzi and I have agreed to continue again this year in a collaborative project implementing changes and improvements from our previous project. The school management team in my school have also been so impressed by the different learning opportunities available through e Twinning and are keen that I continue with this again in the new term.

In addition to the exciting classroom opportunities I can bring to my own pupils through e Twinning, as a British Council Ambassador I now run Continued Professional Development (CPD) training workshops in my local authority area for teachers, training teaching staff on using e Twinning in the classroom.

The READY project has given me so many opportunities to enhance my skills and teaching practice, it has lead me to paths I could not have imagined and through this I have had the opportunity to meet many new and interesting people. For this I feel very lucky and grateful to have been given the opportunity to be part of the project.

Dieses Projekt wurde mit Unterstützung der Europäischen Kommission finanziert. Die Verantwortung für den Inhalt dieser Veröffentlichung trägt allein der Verfasser; die Kommission haftet nicht für die weitere Verwendung der darin enthaltenen Angaben.

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.



Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union

